



Southeastern Idaho News

BANNOCK, BEAR LAKE, BINGHAM, CARIBOU, FRANKLIN, ONEIDA & POWER COUNTIES

ECONOMIC TRENDS

The busy summer season typically creates jobs in retail trade, tourism, construction and the service sector in industries such as agriculture, landscaping, parks and recreation and home improvement. Major road construction projects have also added jobs. This year there were fluctuations in the manufacturing industry as Ballard Kimberly-Clark continued to reduce staff ahead of closing early next year. At the same time, Heinz Frozen Foods continued to increase production and staff. As is typical for this time of year, temporary staffing agencies increased employment to cover seasonal jobs in a variety of industries. While it has recently become a bit more difficult for employers to find workers, it has been a good problem for the area. Many workers have been able to take advantage of promotional opportunities to improve their economic conditions. The season also typically sees reductions in education jobs as schools closed in June and ceased to employ as many people during the summer.

What appeared to be a slow fire season went up in flames toward the end of July and early part of August. More than 600 firefighters have fought fires throughout Bingham, Power and Oneida counties. Fire crews were attacking two major fires in Bingham and Power counties when lightening storms started eight new fires in the area. The largest, the Crystal fire, burned more than 190,000 acres. Fire officials called in firefighters from New Mexico to help local fire crews as winds thwarted containment. A total of eight fires were reported in the Shelley, Aberdeen, Rockland, Arbon Valley and Holbrook areas of southeastern Idaho. About half of the region's fires, including Crystal, were contained after burning nearly 23,000 acres, damaging crops, threatening livestock and major power lines and destroying some agricultural buildings.

AREA WELCOMES EDUCATIONAL LEADERS

The area welcomed two new education leaders: Arthur Vailais, president of Idaho State University, and Mary Vagner, superintendent of the Pocatello/Chubbuck School District. Both bring a philosophy of openness with patrons and a connection to community. In their first weeks on the job, both leaders met rigorous schedules but spent

Southeastern Idaho Table 1: Pocatello MSA Labor Force & Employment
Bannock and Power counties

	Jul 2006*	Jun 2006	Jul 2005	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE					
Seasonally Adjusted					
Civilian Labor Force	44,890	46,270	45,430	-3.0	-1.2
Unemployment	1,770	1,720	1,730	2.9	2.3
% of Labor Force Unemployed	3.9	3.7	3.8		
Total Employment	43,120	44,550	43,700	-3.2	-1.3
Unadjusted					
Civilian Labor Force	43,520	45,620	43,700	-4.6	-0.4
Unemployment	1,640	1,590	1,620	3.1	1.2
% of Labor Force Unemployed	3.8	3.5	3.7		
Total Employment	41,880	44,030	42,080	-4.9	-0.5
JOB BY PLACE OF WORK					
Nonfarm Payroll Jobs** - NAICS	39,020	39,470	37,800	-1.1	3.2
Goods-Producing Industries	6,090	6,080	5,850	0.2	4.1
Natural Resources & Mining	30	30	30	0.0	0.0
Construction	2,720	2,650	2,420	2.6	12.4
Manufacturing	3,340	3,400	3,400	-1.8	-1.8
Food Manufacturing	1,020	1,020	950	0.0	7.4
Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	140	140	150	0.0	-6.7
Machinery Manufacturing	100	100	100	0.0	0.0
Other Manufacturing	2,080	2,140	2,200	-2.8	-5.5
Service-Providing Industries	32,930	33,390	31,950	-1.4	3.1
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	7,680	7,570	7,370	1.5	4.2
Wholesale Trade	1,420	1,400	1,370	1.4	3.6
Retail Trade	4,790	4,700	4,540	1.9	5.5
Utilities	50	50	40	0.0	25.0
Transportation & Warehousing	1,420	1,420	1,420	0.0	0.0
Information	770	760	760	1.3	1.3
Financial Activities	2,130	2,130	2,090	0.0	1.9
Professional & Business Services	5,040	5,020	4,670	0.4	7.9
Educational & Health Services	3,400	3,410	3,280	-0.3	3.7
Leisure & Hospitality	3,460	3,510	3,530	-1.4	-2.0
Other Services	1,230	1,240	1,240	-0.8	-0.8
Government Education	4,330	5,250	4,360	-17.5	-0.7
Government Administration	4,890	4,500	4,650	8.7	5.2

*Preliminary Estimate

**Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month

time with their respective cabinets, faculty, staff, students and community organizations. Vailais appeared on the Quadrangle, meeting and greeting faculty, staff and students at the welcome-back, ice-cream social. Vagner and her cabinet spent the first three days of school in the schools, welcoming back faculty, staff and students. The common theme among the Idaho State University and Pocatello/Chubbuck School District communities is one of a positive new beginning under hands-on leaders.

AREA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS

Bannock County

- A partnership between local business owner Dorsey Hill of Bangs Office Products and the Greater Pocatello Chamber of Commerce will result in a new location for the chamber. Hill purchased the former Bannock Col-

lections building on South Main, and the Chamber of Commerce will assist in renovating the building before leasing it from Hill. The chamber hopes to occupy the new office this fall.

- The Southeast Idaho Farmer's Market changed locations this year from Pocatello City Hall parking lot to the railroad parking lot in Old Town Pocatello. The relocation, based on increased sales, has been a successful move for organizers and vendors. Market organizers said the market grossed approximately \$7,500 on Saturdays last year. This year, the market has exceeded \$10,000 in Saturday sales. The Union Pacific Railroad donated an old signal shop near the location of the Farmer's Market to Old Town Pocatello. The building is being renovated by a NeighborhoodWorks America grant from Home Depot. Once renovated, the shop will be used for the Farmers Market and other community events. The relocation of the Farmers Market to the Old Town Pocatello area should spark other economic activity and pedestrian traffic for the businesses there.
- Several stores are under construction at Pocatello Square and plan to open no later than the Christmas shopping season. Staples, an office supply store, opened in early August. Store officials would not disclose the number of employees currently working at the store, but a store that size typically employs more than 25 workers. Officials would disclose that approximately 20 percent of their employees are supervisory or management personnel. The store hired workers in mid-July to stock shelves and prepare the store for its opening. Famous Footwear, Bed, Bath & Beyond, Ross Dress for Less and Sportsman's Warehouse should be completed by October and open prior to the holiday shopping season. While the project has created jobs in construction and industries that serve the construction sector, the opening of the new stores will create more than 100 permanent jobs in the city and decrease the number of people leaving the area to shop elsewhere.
- Pocatello Distribution Partners, the group hired by the city of Pocatello to develop the Pocatello Regional Airport, will begin construction of the first set of six, 10,000 square-foot warehouses at the airport this fall. Work on the second set will begin next spring and the third set in the fall of 2007. The group hopes to finalize plans for larger buildings this fall and begin their construction next spring. The project will set the groundwork for a major distribution center at the airport and could provide a much needed boost for Pocatello air traffic.
- A groundbreaking ceremony was held for the U.S. Highway 30 improvement project between McCammon and Lava Hot Springs. This project is the first in what has been estimated to be the \$1.6 billion Connect Idaho program to upgrade roads throughout Idaho. Gov. Jim Risch operated the backhoe that moved the first shovel of dirt for the project.

Bingham County

- West Nile virus has struck livestock and people throughout the state. But Bingham County has seen the highest incidence of the mosquito-borne illness in southeastern Idaho. The county has confirmed more

than 32 cases of the virus and has conducted aerial and ground spraying to eliminate mosquitoes and reduce the risk. Idaho currently leads the nation in the number of confirmed cases of the virus at over 300.

- Bridge Street Image beauty salon opened in Blackfoot, offering a full line of hair care services and spa treatments. Owner and stylist Megan Fields is joined in the salon by stylist Alicia Murdock.
- Sartori Foods has acquired the Blackfoot Cheese Co. from Antigo Cheese of Wisconsin. The business employs about 40 people, but the economic impact is far greater. It purchases about 11 million pounds of milk a year from members of the local Snake River Dairyman's Association. The company manufactures several specialty cheeses and expects to grow in the future.
- PBG's restaurant is the first business under construction at the new Gifford Village commercial development near Jensen Grove Lake and the Blackfoot Airport. It should open near the end of November. The restaurant will overlook Jensen Grove Lake and park and will have conference rooms and a full bar. Construction will begin soon on an American. The development's atmosphere, in a park-like setting with views of the lake and airport, will likely provide what its businesses need to survive and thrive in the city, providing it with amenities and jobs.
- A ribbon cutting was held for the \$5 million addition to the National Small Grains Germplasm Research Facility at the University of Idaho Research and Extension Center in Aberdeen. The 12,000 square-foot addition, known as the Advanced Genetics Laboratory, will be used for designing and conducting experiments to breed superior potatoes and grains.

Caribou County

- Chemical Lime's Tenmile Plant, located north of Bancroft, opened in June after being closed for six years. Market conditions have changed, making the production of good-quality lime feasible. The plant resumed operation in June and employs 19 workers. The company plans to begin mining again some time this fall and will employ another 15 workers.

Franklin County

- Construction has begun on the city of Franklin's first new residential subdivision, Legacy Ranch. More than 200 homes and approximately 150 townhouses are planned for the development, which also includes a retirement community. The city just completed a \$1.8 million water system upgrade in anticipation of the growth. Completion of the subdivision could double the city's population. The project, which began this summer, will take up to seven years.

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